

ON THE HORIZON

ANTI-SEMITISM IN SOCIALISM

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SINCE the touchstone that Jewish thought has not infrequently applied to any political or social movement is the movement's attitude toward anti-Semitism, the appearance at this time of a distinct anti-Socialist bias among certain Jewish thinkers is not surprising. *Anti-Semitism in the French Labor Movement* by Z. Szajkowski (published in Yiddish by the author, New York, 1948) is a prime example, especially when taken with some recent articles by the same author ("Socialist Antisemitism in Algeria" in *Jewish Social Studies*, July 1948; "The Jewish Saint-Simonians and Socialist Antisemites in France," *Jewish Social Studies*, January 1947). The factors that prompt this altered Jewish judgment are not far to seek. The British Labor government, as defender of what is left of the British Empire, has opposed Jewish nationalism's will to establish a Jewish state. In an atmosphere charged with the after-effects of the annihilation of six million Jews, the mean-spirited and stupid

RECENTLY, socialism has found itself under attack as anti-Semitic in certain Jewish quarters. How this happens, and what truth there is in the charge, SAMUEL GRINGAUZ attempts here to discover; and in tracing the connection of anti-Semitism with socialism he offers a suggestive generalization on the relationship to anti-Semitism of all political movements. Mr. Gringauz was born in 1900 in what was then East Prussia, and studied economics, law, and philosophy at Koenigsberg, Bern, and Karlsruhe, and in Russia, Italy, and France. After his liberation from a German concentration camp, he was president of the Congress and Council of Liberated Jews in the US zone of Germany. Mr. Gringauz is now living in the United States and is engaged in social science research. This article was translated from the German by Martin Greenberg.

policy of Bevinism thus becomes the occasion for a Jewish political attack on socialism as a whole.

Ostensibly *Anti-Semitism in the French Labor Movement* is a historical survey of French socialist literature in the 19th century—but Mr. Szajkowski does not conceal the fact that his target is elsewhere. He writes: "Many readers will regard the facts I have cited as simply representing the tactics of a section of the socialists, tactics indeed that have done the Jews considerable harm, but nevertheless merely tactics and not outright anti-Semitism—just as the Bevin policy represents the tactics of a socialist foreign minister but is in no sense anti-Semitic. It is my contention that all the facts I have cited are not merely symptomatic of bad tactics . . . they constitute anti-Semitism."

Mr. Szajkowski's book, then, attributes a historical and social-ideological foundation to the transitory policy pursued by some small-minded former trade union leaders in the Labor government, under the influence of experienced and malevolent colonial officials. This, I do not hesitate to say immediately, is sociologically wrong; even more important, it is politically unsound, as it diverts attention from more basic issues.

THE author (who is a member of the Yiddish Scientific Institute in New York) rescues from oblivion a great number of literary documents, forgotten statements, and other facts that will interest specialists. It has been known, for example, that the Fourierists and the Proudhonians exploited anti-Semitic feeling in the interests of their anti-capitalist propaganda, and that Fourierism made use of anti-Semitic arguments in its struggle against Saint-Simonism. The anti-Semitic works of the Fourierist, A. Toussenel (*Les juifs, rois*

de l'époque, 1845); of the Proudhonian, Georges Duchêne (*L'empire industriel*, 1896); of the socialist, Auguste Chirac (*Les rois de la république*); of the Bakuninist, Gustav Tridon (*Le molochisme juif*, 1884); of the Belgian socialist, Edmond Picard; and of others—all this has been well known and cited. But Mr. Szajkowski's work reminds us, in addition, that such leading socialist periodicals as *La Revue Socialiste*, *Le Socialiste*, and *La Petite République* lent their support to anti-Semitic literature; that many of the leading socialists were sympathetic to the work of Edouard Drumont, founder of modern anti-Semitism; that noted socialists and labor leaders conducted anti-Semitic campaigns. Nor did we know of the anti-Semites among the early Communards until Mr. Szajkowski discovered them for us; of the anti-Semitic tinge in the utterances of such leaders of the Marxist wing of the French socialists as Jules Guesde, Paul Lafargue, A. Zevaes, and of their opposition to the fight to clear Dreyfus (it should be borne in mind, however, that this opposition was not consciously anti-Semitic, but was based on Marxist principle, and was shared by some Jewish socialists as well—as, for example, Philipp Kranz of the New York Yiddish newspaper *Abendblatt*); of the anti-Semitic demonstrations of the anarchist A. F. H. Hammon; of the close collaboration of the well-known socialist, K. R. Severine, with Drumont; of the long-standing violent socialist anti-Semitism in Algeria; of the anti-Semitism of René Viviani; of the anti-Dreyfus attitude displayed by most of the French socialist leaders—including Jaurès—in the first years of the Dreyfus Affair; and of many other things.

Valuable as this research of Mr. Szajkowski's may be, it opens no new doors to an understanding of the essence of modern anti-Semitism. That there has existed, in Western Europe, a psychological affinity between socialist and anti-Semitic feeling is a fact that has long been noticed. August Bebel called anti-Semitism the "socialism of fools." At the close of the 19th century, the well-known sociologist Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu wrote: "Anti-Semitism ends up in a kind of anti-capitalism and, consequently, in a kind of socialism. On this level anti-Semitism joins hands with socialism and arrives at the same conclusions. . . . Thus anti-Semitism ends

up in socialism, a socialism of the Right. . . . All those whose hopes in life have been disappointed, all those whose incomes are inferior to their appetites find consolation in having for a live target a circumscribed group of people against whom the anger of the masses, with all their rancors and resentments, can be directed" (*Les doctrines de haine*, Paris, 1902).

Just as socialism in many instances used anti-Semitic slogans to win over the masses (in 19th-century France, especially, and in a particularly brazen fashion in Algeria), so too anti-Semitism used socialist appeals to win the masses over to its own side. The famous anti-Semitic ideologist Drumont called this "the social function of anti-Semitism." This affinity between socialism and anti-Semitism later found expression in fascist ideology, whose strongest roots lay in Drumont's "national socialism" and in the anti-intellectual, anti-capitalist theories enunciated by such ideologists as Georges Sorel, Vilfredo Pareto, Georges Valois, and others.

It is significant that anti-Semitic aberrations almost always manifested themselves, not at the center, but on the periphery of the socialist movement. With the end of the Dreyfus Affair and the creation of a single socialist party in 1905 (the SFIO), French socialism definitively renounced all anti-Semitic leanings, as did all the other great mass parties of organized socialism. Since then anti-Semitism has played no role in the official movement. All the socialist parties have condemned anti-Semitism in their formal pronouncements and they have regarded anti-Semitic activity as cause for expulsion. It is true that people outside the official socialist parties have called themselves socialists and carried on anti-Semitic propaganda; and that such men as Marcel Déat, Henrik DeMan, and Jacques Doriot served their political apprenticeships in socialist parties only to adhere later to fascist and Nazi ideology. But it is not easy to see how socialism can be held responsible for them.

ANTI-SEMITISM has gone through several stages in the course of time. Once its chief source was religious fanaticism and the legacy of feelings it left behind. Then it became chiefly political, and testified to a hostility to liberalism and rationalism. In the present postwar period, however, anti-Semi-

tism has lost its specific connection with political reaction and acquired more of a mass-psychological character. At the same time, the outlines of a new kind of anti-Semitism may be emerging, one that has its roots in the clash of Jewish national aspirations with the foreign policies pursued by the statesmen of certain countries.

It would, however, be a complete mistake, because a country whose foreign policy is in conflict with the Jews happens to have a government of a certain kind, to draw conclusions as to the character of the general political movement of which that government is a part; just as in general it would be a mistake to describe certain political parties as anti-Semitic or philo-Semitic "on principle." The fact is that neither liberalism, nor socialism, nor fascism is anti-Semitic, *on principle*. All depends on the moral force and strength of character exercised by the particular party leadership in the concrete circumstances of time and place—that is, it depends on whether the leadership of a party has sufficient moral courage and strength of tradition to forego awakening and exploiting base emotions by anti-Semitic slander and whether it has the courage, too, to condemn such slander when it comes from the opposition.

MANY books have been written on anti-Semitism, and many causes have, with more or less correctness, been assigned to it. But one thing cannot be disputed—anti-Semitism springs from an artificial, not a natural impulse; it is never begotten of itself alone, and it is always the product of suggestion and incitation. Anti-Semitism is not a political movement but a political weapon. Anti-Semitism has never been an ideology or a moral principle in itself, but always a provocation aiming at certain entirely practical ends in the service of a larger cause. In periods of religious fanaticism, it was propagated by religious leaders as a means of strengthening their hold on the masses. In succeeding ages it was used to discredit liberal capitalism and stir the populace against it. The French socialists used anti-Semitism as a means to win over the masses, and they personified capitalism in Rothschild; the Fourierists used it to discredit Saint-Simonism. To discredit their

socialist and Marxist opponents, Bakunin and his followers did not stop at anti-Semitism. To discredit socialism in the United States, anti-Semitic feelings were stirred up against its followers. Atheistic socialists and followers of modern paganism even tried to rouse anti-Semitic emotions against Christianity itself by calling it a product of Judaism (e.g. Alfred Rosenberg's *Myth of the 20th Century*). Pierre Hervé, too, co-editor of the Communist newspaper *l'Humanité*, wishing to discredit his political opponents, the socialists, could not refrain from anti-Semitic allusions (*La libération trahie*, 1945).

Nor was even Nazi anti-Semitism by any means a philosophical principle or an innate psychological attribute. It too was the product of cold calculation. Hitler confessed to his friend Rauschning: "The Jews are a valuable hostage given to me by the democracies. Anti-Semitic propaganda in all countries is an almost indispensable medium of the extension of our political campaign." And Julius Streicher, the most brutal exponent of Nazi anti-Semitism, was never more candid than when he said in the Hercules Halle in Nuremberg on April 21, 1932: "The German worker can be won *only* if these words are continually hammered into him—the Jews are our misfortune." Joseph Goebbels, in a circular to his propaganda department dated October 29, 1942, stated point-blank that anti-Jewish agitation was the sole means of winning over the Russian population and that the Fuehrer was staking everything on it.

For the Jewish understanding of this problem, it is essential to recognize that no political tendency is by its nature anti-Semitic or anti-anti-Semitic; that different things can follow according to the moral level and practical judgment shown by different political leaderships at different times and in different places (Italian fascism, Rumanian liberalism, British socialism). It follows also, of course, that if socialism is by no means anti-Semitic "on principle," it is not on the other hand intrinsically immune to anti-Semitism. But the basic fact should not be obscured: whether in socialism or in any other political movement, anti-Semitism is never primary, it is always secondary. It is never the cause, but a weapon enlisted in the service of a cause.